

REMARKS

Claims 1-17 are pending. By this amendment, claim 17 is amended.

The office action requires that an election be made between Group I, claims 1-16, and Group II, claim 17. Group I, claims 1-16 are hereby elected, with traverse.

For a restriction to be proper, the inventions must be independent or distinct, and there must be a serious burden on the Examiner if restriction is not required. See MPEP 803.01. In the present case, claim 17 contains the same limitations as claim 1. Accordingly, a search for the elements of claim 1 would necessarily include a search for the elements of claim 17. Thus, there would be no additional burden on the Examiner to examine both groups and the restriction is improper.

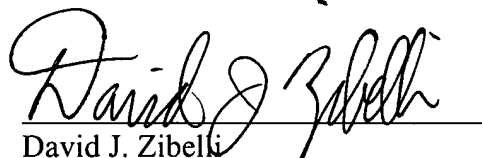
Further, it is noted that even if the restriction is maintained, MPEP 821.04 requires that the method claim be rejoined if the product claims are found allowable.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at (202) 220-4232 to discuss any matter concerning this application.

The Applicants do not believe that any additional fees are required in connection with this submission. Nonetheless, the Applicants authorize payment of any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or § 1.17 or credit of any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-0600.

Respectfully submitted,

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